

## The Washington Times

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SUNDAY, MAY 10, 1914.

## THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND.

The process of taxing the land-owners off the land and the people on it goes ahead in Australia. One magnificent estate of 55,000 acres in New South Wales, owned by a corporation, is to be broken up and sold in small tracts. It has been used for grazing purposes, and the laws of the province provide for a heavier tax upon favorably located lands than used than would be imposed if they were under cultivation. The owners find that they cannot afford to pay the tax and get the small returns that grazing permits.

That same thing is going on in old Wales, as well as in new; it has made great progress in Ireland; it is hand-somely under way in England, and to a less extent only in Scotland, as a result of the workings of the land taxation laws which Lloyd-George has written into his budgets. He is now proposing further to increase these duties on uncultivated lands, and thus to add to the incentive for great holders to give the people a chance.

The doctrine of the two Georges, that the land must belong to the people because the people must live by it, gains ground steadily all over the world. The realization, now at last breaking on the public, that the Mexican peons are really fighting for this same thing, just as the liberals in Britain are, is compelling a more gracious attitude toward the irreconcilables in the southern republic.

## SOUTH CAROLINA HOPES TO ESCAPE BLEASE.

South Carolina, through a readjustment of the regulations governing the Democratic primary, cherishes high hopes of being able to escape the insufferable Blease, now governor, to private life. If its hopes prove well founded, those responsible will have performed a public service entitling them to the lasting gratitude of their fellow-citizens.

For the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate, which, of course, is equivalent to election, Blease is opposed by Senator E. D. Smith. In the choice of delegates to the State convention, which will revise the primary rules, Senator Smith is reported to have won a majority. The plan is to require voters to present to present tax receipts and registration certificates, which the State law exacts at general elections. That seems entirely fair, for it is obvious that no one should be allowed to vote at the one who is not qualified to vote at the other.

To South Carolinians of the better sort the continued ascendancy of Blease in the political affairs of the State has been a constant and almost unendurable humiliation. They know the prospect of their release from such bondage with jubilation and the waving of banners and the shouting of the country will wish them speed.

## MORE CITY MANAGERS.

There is no question that the idea of centralizing power in city government is growing. We see it at work in New York, where the tendency is to abolish useless boards and officials and more and more converge authority in the mayor and the board of estimate and apportionment.

In smaller and less cumbersome municipalities this trend may be carried to the ultimate length, and so we have the city manager, in whom all the responsibility for a town's management is centered. The extent of this movement may be gained from study of a "City Manager's Directory," which has been compiled by the National Short Ballot Organization, of which Woodrow Wilson is president.

Thirteen cities in this country have entrusted their guidance to a single individual from Dayton, Ohio, to High Island, Tex., down to villages of the size of Hickory and Morganton, N. C. Altogether approximately 275,000 persons live under this form of city government, not a particularly imposing mass, it is true, but still enough to insure that the new idea shall get a fair trial.

The list holds Sumter, S. C.; Hickory and Morganton, Dayton, Springfield, Ohio; La Grande, Ore.; Cadillac, Mich.; Manistee, Mich.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Morris, Minn.; Amarillo, Texas; Montrose, Col.; and Abilene, Texas.

Something of the antecedents of ten of the city managers is given in the directory. Civil engineers are an overwhelming majority, seven out of the whole. One is a contractor.

One is a school teacher by profession, and another was a district clerk before his appointment. The salaries listed range from \$12,500, paid to Henry M. Waite, of Dayton, to \$1,200, paid to R. W. Pipkin, who decides the destinies of Morganton. The average salary is \$3,930 a year.

Altogether it is a worth while experiment in civics which we are performing in our national test tube. Here for century on century humanity has been striving to break down centralized power, has upset kings and has formed popular assemblies to be checks and balances upon hereditary and other concentrated authority. The whole trend has been toward the diffusion of authority.

And now we turn about and start in the other direction and take power from the hands of the many and place it in the keeping of the few. The result will be watched closely by thoughtful observers.

## HUERTA'S FINAL STRUGGLE.

On seemingly excellent authority comes the report that Huerta is massing his troops, not along the line of Villa's advance from the north, but on the route by which an American army would have to approach Mexico City. The dictator wants to make his last stand, not against Villa, but against the force under General Funston.

Small wonder, if he were less disgraced to his military reputation—which, by the way, is a good deal of a fraud—to go down before the trained regulars of the American army than before the impromptu forces of the constitutionalists. Moreover, Huerta's own chance of escaping from the country with his life would be vastly better if he should fall into American than into constitutionalist hands.

It can hardly longer be doubted that Huerta is determined to provoke an advance by the Americans from Vera Cruz; and that advance cannot be undertaken under any circumstances that would render its success in any wise doubtful. No matter how many troops may be required, they must be ready for their part, if the war has to be pushed into the interior. Villa will take Mexico City if he is given time and if Huerta does not succeed in his effort to force the American hand. But he will probably manage to gain this latter point. The arrests of newspaper correspondents from the States indicate nothing so much as a purpose to try a new tack in the devious course of insults to this country. The Tampico incident did not produce a real invasion. The demand for possession of the waterworks plant at Vera Cruz has not thus far brought on a conflict. There remains the possibility of deliberate attack on the Funston force around Vera Cruz.

Huerta, captured by an American army, would be a problem on our hands not altogether unlike that which Napoleon presented after Waterloo. He would have to be disposed of in some fashion, and it isn't the American way to stand in convenient persons up against convenient stone walls and shoot them full of lead. That doubtless would be the easy way of getting rid of Huerta, but it is a procedure that would better be left to the constitutionalists. Huerta knows very well that Villa would have no compunctions about sending him to that end, and, for reasons that are quite natural and need no detailed psychological analysis, he doesn't favor the method.

If, then, we are forced into an advance, and forced to fight the last and greatest battle of the present war in Mexico, the difficulties of our situation will be as great as ever. To scuttle instantly and turn the country over to the delicate attentions of Villa, at least before a reliable and reasonably stable government had been set up, would be quite impossible. Yet the very fact of our presence in the country and at the capital would add in some ways to the difficulty of creating that kind of a government.

## CANADA'S NEW RULER.

Prince Alexander of Teck, who is announced as the next governor general of Canada, is the third son of the late Duke of Teck, whose chief distinction was that his daughter married the present King of England. The prince, though only forty years old, has a good record as a soldier. He served in Natal and in the Boer war, and won a medal in each campaign. His wife, who was Princess Alice of Albany, a cousin of the King, is pretty and dresses well, and that helps a good deal in Canada.

The Dominion will doubtless welcome its new ruler with open arms. Canada loves royal blood and pomp. It has had King Edward's brother as its governor general, and now it is to have Queen Mary's brother. Relations are useful things for a King of England to have, especially when they are not permitted to make any mistakes.

And governors general of Canada have little opportunity to make mistakes. True, executive power is vest-

ed in a governor general as the King's representative, but the people are the bosses. The governor general appoints the members of the senate, but the senate has little power in the Dominion parliament. The house of commons runs the ministry, and the ministry runs the governor general. The King is commander-in-chief of the military forces of the Dominion, but none of this power is relegated to the governor general. Parliament controls the army.

The prince is stepping into a nice job, full of handshaking, official balls, ice carnivals, and hospital openings.

## REFORMING THE SCHOOLS.

The public schools have been a long time under critical observation, and many suggestions have been put forward for improving them. The Commissioner of Education, Dr. Claxton, has given indorsement to the scheme of having a six-year high school course, instead of four, and of cutting down the period spent in the grades from eight to six. There is a good deal to commend the plan, as is testified by the fact that some important organizations of educators have given it their approval. Without doubt, Dr. Claxton is correct when he observes that at present the pupils in many schools largely mark time through their years in the seventh and eighth grades. They are old enough to take up some of the high school branches, especially the languages, yet they are not pressed into these studies.

Moreover, Dr. Claxton believes that if children could be pushed into the high school earlier, there would be a tendency for a larger proportion of them to remain throughout that course. At present altogether too many of them accept the conclusion of the grade work as the reasonable end of their school careers, and "go to work." If they were two years younger at the high school's threshold, they would be started on that course because they would not be old enough to work; and once started, the disposition would be to remain if they could.

There is one suggestion in Dr. Claxton's statement of the case for the longer high school course that will be opposed by many parents, however, and we suspect by most teachers. It is that a plan could be devised for promoting the teachers from grade to grade along with the pupils, so that the teacher with an intimate understanding of the personalities, temperaments, dispositions, and needs of a given group of children could march right along through the course with them. That sounds well enough; the weakness is that there are too many teachers that have little capacity to study these aspects of the individual child and guide her work accordingly. The class of children that fell under the dominance of a careless, ill-equipped, and inconsiderate teacher, and had to follow for several years while that teacher progressed through the course, would be unfortunate, indeed. It is true that the teachers might be much broadened if they were brought into touch with a wider range of work; but the danger of imposing a poor teacher for a long period on a particular class of pupils would be decidedly serious.

## THE OIL MEN'S PLIGHT.

The plight of the American and English oil well operators of the lawless and anarchical Tampico region makes the business side of the miserable Mexican muddle crystal clear.

Sixty-eight American and English corporations have holdings in Tampico oil lands, which they value at \$500,000,000. The wells, the oil men say, produce about \$4,000,000 of yield every year. During the anti-American outbreak last month, following the "flag insult" incident, the operators found they could not get protection from Secretary Bryan, Admiral Mayo (whose fleet had been recalled), Huerta or Carranza. The American consul at Tampico told them that they must leave the country. This they did. They left so hastily that they didn't even take time to "cap" their oil wells. The oil from these wells is still wastefully flowing. One spark of fire upon it and one of the world's most productive oil regions would be drained, perhaps forever.

The oil men want President Wilson either to send back the American battleships or to have the oil region declared neutral. Intervention is what they want most of all. Secretary Daniels has already told them that they risked their money in Mexico with their eyes open and that the United States Government had no commission to police foreign countries for private capital. But the oil men retort that their seemingly personal and passing interests are, in reality, identical with the universal and permanent interests which the entire civilized world has at stake in the inextinguishable natural resources of war-torn Mexico.

The oil men are now about to ask President Wilson in person whether this identity of interests isn't true, the answer which President Wilson makes is a matter of import not only to the oil men but to the whole country.

All of which is incident to a report, and Mrs. Ashurst, who is proud of that distinction cherishes that event as fondly as an American woman honors the name of Betsy Ross.

William of Orange attacked the city in 1688, and Patrick Sarsfield defended it. Beaulieu with his French troops, was there to help Sarsfield, but the English invaders contemptuously remarked that a volley of pointed apples would smash the tottering walls and send the invaders flying back to their ships.

The women of Limerick, who are celebrating the need for women's participation in municipal affairs might be surprised to find that Dublin has no member of its city council called a woman. Mrs. Harrison and Lady Duffell not only is a member of the urban council of Kingston, but formerly was chairman of the council for some years, and under her administration the townships were improved as it never did before.

Irish women, abundant in heroism, Mrs. Ashurst will tell you, if you are not familiar with the long roll of women who have inspired in important political events, they are common among the principal contributors to the nation's cause. The organ that did most to stir Ireland's soul was an attempted revolution. These women, who under the name of "The Ladies' Land League" were the "Sisters of the Gael," were Mrs. Ashurst will tell you, if you are not familiar with the long roll of women who have inspired in important political events, they are common among the principal contributors to the nation's cause. The organ that did most to stir Ireland's soul was an attempted revolution. These women, who under the name of "The Ladies' Land League" were the "Sisters of the Gael," were Mrs. Ashurst will tell you, if you are not familiar with the long roll of women who have inspired in important political events, they are common among the principal contributors to the nation's cause. 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